

# Polish Labour Migration to the UK: Data Discrepancies, Migrant Distributions, and Indicators of Entrepreneurial Activity

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# **Polish Labour Migration to the UK: Data Discrepancies, Migrant Distributions and Indicators of Entrepreneurial Activity**

## **Abstract**

This paper contributes to a growing body of work on labour market migration to the UK from the New Member States of the EU, particularly the migration of Polish nationals to the UK, drawing attention to the weaknesses of existing datasets which attempt to quantify these migration flows and in particular to map the geographical distribution of migrants. The analysis of Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) and National Insurance Number Allocation (NINo) data, demonstrates that NMS migration has focused on urban and rural locales rather than having a predominantly rural or 'peripheral' area bias. The paper also argues that the discrepancies between WRS and NINo data potentially reveal a 'hidden' geography of self-employment and entrepreneurial activity amongst NMS migrants which merits further investigation.

**Key words:** West Midlands, South East, NINo registrations, New Member States (NMS), spatial distribution, Polish migrants, entrepreneurship, self-employment.

# Polish Labour Migration to the UK: Data Discrepancies, Migrant Distributions and Entrepreneurial Activity

## Introduction

There is a growing body of research into international, and particularly EU, migration, which has focused on macro-level flows and impacts at the national and international scales, such as the economy of the receiving country (Blanchflower *et al.* 2007) and migrant employment opportunities (Anderson *et al.* 2006; Drinkwater *et al.* 2007), and on studies of individual migrant communities at the local level, such as literature focusing on large cities (GAWC 2009), migration hotspots (Leapman 2007) or on the place of migrant labour in London's economy (e.g. Evans *et al.* 2005; May *et al.* 2007; Wills *et al.* 2009). The two are of course interconnected, with the macro level data commonly informing the selection of local case studies, and local case studies explaining wider migration trends (Stenning and Dawley 2009; self-reference).

The enlargement of the European Union and the accession of ten new member states (NMS) in 2004 (Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Malta, Slovakia and Slovenia) and 2007 (Bulgaria and Romania) led to new migration flows across Europe. The understanding of these flows is complicated by imperfect datasets which make it difficult to identify and explore trends and to select locations for further research. This paper argues that the future selection of case studies of NMS migrant labour could be informed by a better understanding of the geography of immigration at the national, regional and local level, which is itself

reliant on a better understanding of the datasets available and discrepancies between them. This is important not only because appropriately interpreting the datasets is critical in the selection of locales, but also because exploring the discrepancies between different datasets can in itself generate research questions for further enquiry.

This article explores Polish migration to the UK by examining two datasets: the Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) and National Insurance Number Allocations (NINo) in relation to NMS. It calls into question the emphasis that has been placed on NMS migration as predominantly focused on rural or 'peripheral' areas of the UK (Stenning and Dawley 2009), and suggests that an exploration of the differences between the migrant distribution data generated by the WRS and NINo generates some potentially fruitful avenues for future research. The differences *between* these datasets suggest that a significant proportion of Polish migrants may be entrepreneurs establishing their own businesses, rather than employees.

The enlargement of the EU in 2004 has had a profound impact on migration patterns to the United Kingdom. Since the initial arrival of EU labour migrants, including those from Poland, who account for 60-70% of all registered UK migrant workers, researchers have tried to track these migration flows (Anderson *et al.* 2006; Scott 2006; Blanchflower *et al.* 2007; Burrell 2008; Currie 2008), in parallel with media attention, which initially concentrated on the perceived negative impacts of immigration on welfare benefits and labour markets, but which by 2008 had shifted emphasis to suggest that Polish migrants were leaving the UK in the wake of the

financial crisis. Nevertheless, a significant Polish immigrant population remains in the UK, and we argue that their participation in local labour markets, and their impact on local and regional development, merit greater academic and policy attention, not least because early evidence has shown that Accession 8 (A8)<sup>1</sup> migrants, in particular those from Poland, have a more diverse geography of employment and residence than do previous waves of migrants (Stenning *et al.* 2006).

Further in-depth place-based research on NMS migration to the UK is required, and we argue here that it could be better guided by the analysis of the database of annual National Insurance Number (NINo) allocations to adult overseas (non-UK) nationals entering the UK. This database provides a particularly useful set of data pertaining specifically to the intended economic activity of migrants, since it directly reflects their intention to work in the UK. The paper also highlights that the database can be used to identify self-employment as a potentially important missing driver behind EU accession migration. We have previously outlined the utility of this data source (self reference), and we briefly summarise this discussion before comparing the WRS and NINo datasets, as they pertain to NMS and Polish migrants, at the national, regional and local level. This analysis highlights differences between these datasets and explores some possible reasons for these discrepancies, identifying directions for future research. This paper builds upon our previous work (self-reference) identifying the utility of the NINo dataset and explores how this dataset, along with the WRS, can be analysed to demonstrate complexity of the geography of NMS migration to the UK at the national, regional and local level. This complexity

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<sup>1</sup> The A8 countries are Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.

(urban and rural location, and employment as well as self-employment) is explored through comparison of the West Midlands and the South East with a consideration of the scale of Local Authority, demonstrating variation in Polish migration within rather than between regions (self-reference). We develop our earlier work (self-reference) by investigating localised 'hotspots' of Polish NINO registrations and exploring in further detail Polish entrepreneurial activity in these 'hotspots'.

In addition to the use of quantitative data, this paper adds to the rich qualitative studies on NMS migrants in the UK (Pollard *et al.* 2008; White and Ryan 2008; Ryan *et al.* 2008; Sales *et al.* 2009; Lopez-Rodriguez *et al.* 2010; Rabikowska 2010; Temple 2010; White 2010; Ryan and Sales 2011) whilst highlighting the disconnect between quantitative and qualitative research. In this case quantitative analysis identifies self-employment as a potentially important feature of Polish migration to the UK - a potentially fruitful avenue for further qualitative enquiry.

The paper is organised as follows. First we summarise the background to Polish Immigration to the UK in order to contextualise the labour migration of Poles. Next we consider the respective strengths and weaknesses of data sources which have thus far informed the study of NMS and Polish labour migration, and examine the differences between two of these in terms of the trends that can be identified. Thirdly, previous studies of labour migration from the NMS since 2002 are explored. A sub-national analysis of the geography of Polish immigrants is undertaken based

on two Government Office Regions (GOR)<sup>2</sup> (the South East and the West Midlands). In so doing, a complex geography of NMS migration is developed that draws attention to places which seem to be significant as destinations for Polish migrants seeking to work in the UK, but which have so far been overlooked in local and regional studies of their labour market participation and impact on local and regional economic development. Self-employment or entrepreneurship is identified as an important element in Polish immigration to the UK. The conclusion identifies future avenues for research.

### **The Background to Polish Immigration to the UK**

In the UK, debates surrounding migration have grown considerably following the 2004 enlargement of the European Union (EU) to the East and again in 2007. The EU is a free trade area, with 'free movement of workers' (FMOW) for all its citizens, without visas or work permits (Portes and French 2005, 3). Previous accessions had caused EU Member States (the 'EU-15') considerable concern about the impact of complete liberalisation on their labour markets, and the Accession Treaties gave the EU-15 the option to delay implementation of full FMOW for up to seven years. Most, including France, Germany and Spain, imposed restrictions on movement in one form or another; the United Kingdom was one of only three countries (along with Ireland and Sweden) to allow migrants from the NMS to enter their labour markets more or less without restriction. The UK government announced in December 2002

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<sup>2</sup> The government office region (GOR) was the largest administrative level in England until 2011. GORs were built up of complete counties/unitary authorities so although they are subject to change they always reflect administrative boundaries as at the end of the previous year. They are now referred to as regions. However, this paper retains the use of GOR since this was the title officially used during the time which the data in the refers to.

that it would allow immediate free movement of A8 country workers following accession making it a desirable destination for NMS migrants, including Polish workers.

There is an abundance of research into the associated waves of migration brought about by EU enlargement (see Dustmann *et al.* 2003; Anderson *et al.* 2006; Scott 2006; Stenning *et al.* 2006; Blanchflower *et al.* 2007; LGA 2007; Currie 2008; Lemos and Portes 2008). The vast majority of post-enlargement migrants living in Britain are working. According to the LFS, 84 per cent of A8 and A2<sup>3</sup> nationals of working age living in the UK in December 2007 were in work (Pollard *et al.* 2008, 30). This figure is higher than the percentage of UK nationals of working age in employment (76 per cent) and is one of the highest levels among all foreign nationals living in the UK (Pollard *et al.* 2008, 30). One of the reasons for this could be that these migrants are 'white' (Roediger 2005; McDowell 2007). McDowell *et al.* explain that this gives "them a clear advantage in labour markets distinguished by racialized and ethnic disadvantage" (2009, 5).

In 2007 more than half of those registering on the WRS were in temporary employment. The agricultural and business, administration and management sectors employ very high proportions of temporary workers, while the majority of workers in the hospitality and catering and manufacturing sectors are permanent (Home Office 2008). This type of work is often seen as poorly paid and precarious in nature (McDowell *et al.* 2009). Work may be unstimulating, but it is not necessarily

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<sup>3</sup> The A2 countries are Bulgaria and Romania. Combined with the A8 countries they become the A10 countries.



permanent. Employees often envisage progressing to better jobs, in or outside the UK, having “gained contacts, experience or repaid debt” (Anderson *et al.* 2006, 114). Anderson *et al.* (2006) comment that “for migrants, poor work, low pay and uncertain status can be rendered more tolerable if their situation is perceived as temporary” (ibid, 114). This does not mean that stay in the UK is necessarily regarded as temporary. This short-term element to Polish migration complicates the relations between stocks and flows and therefore one-off NINo and WRS registrations may not necessarily represent one trip to the UK or one job in one location.

Polish immigrants are a heterogeneous group including unskilled and semi-skilled workers, in addition to students and graduates who are seeking short-term employment (Düvell 2004). Their presence has been hugely popular among the middle classes, who needed plumbers and nannies, and welcomed by the catering and construction industries, local public transport and by agriculture. Their work ethic has been praised by employers, customers and fellow workers alike.

The focus on the economically driven nature of this migration has been strong; many researchers have highlighted the high levels of unemployment in Poland – 20 per cent in 2003 (Drinkwater *et al.* 2006, 2) – to explain these trends. The role of the UK labour market, in opening its doors to new migrants, has also been widely recognised as a fundamental factor (for example see Pollard *et al.* 2008).

Non-economic motivations and experiences of migration and life in the UK have also

been explored. This research into non-economic experiences extends to the children of Polish migrants with substantial investigations into the schooling of Polish children in the UK (Sales *et al.* 2009; Ryan and Sales 2011; Lopez-Rodriguez *et al.* 2010; D'Angelo and Ryan 2011). Despite the extensive research into the motivations and experiences of Polish migrants measuring the size of their migration flows remains difficult to quantify and requires further investigation.

### **Polish Immigration to the UK: Datasets and Discrepancies**

Previous studies of Polish labour migration to the UK have relied on national level data pertaining to accession migration and the destinations of migrants in the UK. Our contention is that the weaknesses of the data sources most commonly used, in terms of their frequency of collection or publication, their sample survey nature or their geographical scale of data collection, may have portrayed an unbalanced or misleading picture of immigrant distribution, which may have led to potentially interesting sites of study being overlooked.

The enlargement of the European Union (EU) in 2004 and 2007 fuelled debates over immigration and the demand for better statistics. There is a general recognition that official statistics on migration are inadequate, particularly at the local level (LGA Research 2007) with no single, all-inclusive system to measure the movement of people into and out of the UK as a whole, and only infrequent measurement of the actual location of migrants once they have settled in the UK. Existing data sources include the UK Census, the Labour Force Survey, the International Passenger Survey,

and the Worker Registration Scheme (Boden and Rees 2010). Each is explored in [insert Title and self reference] and we briefly summarise that discussion here, along with a consideration of School Census data and a summary of the comparative strengths of the NINo dataset.

The *UK Census* ought to be the most reliable data source for detailed information on the characteristics of immigrants to the UK, requiring every UK resident to feature on a census return. An unknown proportion of residents remain uncounted. The census has particular weaknesses for immigration research; it provides a static snapshot of the UK's population every ten years which misses the accession migration which took place largely between census dates.

All EU member states are required to conduct a *Labour Force Survey* (LFS). In the UK this is a quarterly sample of households, whose purpose "is to provide information on the UK labour market that can then be used to develop, manage, evaluate and report on labour market policies" (ONS 2008). It is used effectively to examine the labour characteristics of recent immigrants (e.g. Drinkwater *et al.* 2006; Sumption 2009), but as a sample survey, the LFS cannot make absolute statements about either the size or the distribution of immigrant populations. Therefore, it is not analysed in detail in this paper, but it is used to support the findings of the analysis of NINo and WRS data.

Data for migrants entering and leaving the UK are largely based on the *International Passenger Survey (IPS)*, a random sample survey based on c250,000 face-to-face

interviews with passengers at airports, seaports and the Channel Tunnel. As the main source for migration studies for over 30 years, the IPS' problems, based on small sample sizes, are well known. Extrapolations from IPS estimate the number and characteristics of migrants intending to stay for a year or longer, and although these insights are valuable, they should be treated with caution in relation to the labour migration of Accession migrants, since the IPS also covers non-working migrants, such as non-working students, family members, and asylum seekers.

Another data source, which has recently been used to support investigations into EU migrants in the UK, particularly those from Poland, is School Census data (Sales *et al.* 2009; Lopez-Rodriguez 2010, D'Angelo and Ryan 2011; Ryan and Sales 2011). This data displays the number of Polish families with young children, and their distribution across Great Britain. Although not flawless (see Department for Education 2012), the School Census Data does provide an insight into family settlement patterns, and therefore could be used to investigate Polish and other EU migrant settlement patterns, which is difficult to determine from some of the other data sources.

Although no longer officially used to monitor migrants entering the UK, data from the *Worker Registration Scheme (WRS)* should in theory capture most economic activity undertaken by migrants between May 2004 and April 2011. [Insert self reference] provide a detailed account of the *WRS* and a brief recap is provided here. The scheme ran from accession in May 2004 until April 2011 when the transitional arrangements of the Worker Registration Scheme expired. Citizens of the A8

countries can now live and work in the UK under the same rules as citizens of other EU member states. The scheme required migrants to register within one month of starting a new job, and to re-register if they changed employer. Each WRS application represents one job, not one applicant, but applicants are only represented once in the data. After 12 months' uninterrupted work migrants acquired full Worker Treaty rights and were free from the requirement to register (Home Office *et al.* 2008). It is estimated that relatively high proportions of migrants, between around a quarter and a third, did not register on the scheme (Drinkwater 2008; Fife Research Coordination Group 2008; Surrey 2006) and the self-employed were not required to register. Pollard *et al.*'s (2008:18) survey of A8 migrants suggested that more than 40% of Poles who worked in the UK since 2004 had never registered on the WRS.

By comparison, the *National Insurance Number (NINo)* dataset for NINo allocations to adult overseas (non-UK) nationals entering the UK, collected by the UK Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) (DWP 2007: 2008) has been described as the most reliable information source on the number of labour migrants entering the UK (Drinkwater 2008; self-reference). NINo registrations give an indication of the number of *working* migrants in the UK, since having a NINo indicates that an individual is highly likely to be employed, or seeking employment (Boden and Rees 2010; DWP 2007). The NINo indicates an individual's entitlement to social security benefits including the state pension<sup>4</sup>. This dataset is valuable as a proxy measure of

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<sup>4</sup> For a detailed discussion of the process of NINo application and the precise nature of data collection and analysis, see (self-reference)

immigration, in that it provides an indication of migrants' geographical distribution<sup>5</sup>.

The dataset can be used to identify the geography of new migrants. Its significant strengths are that data is provided by country of origin, is disaggregated by Government Office Region (GOR), Local Authority (LA) and Parliamentary Constituency (PC) and is published annually. However, it cannot identify step or return migration, emigration, length of stay in the UK, or movement within the UK.

Although its drawbacks are acknowledged (self-reference) the WRS is the dataset most frequently used by researchers investigating the spatial distribution of NMS migrants in the UK (Blanchflower *et al.* 2007; Coombes *et al.* 2007; Stenning and Dawley 2009). The NINo dataset provides a useful comparator for WRS, since although the measures are different they essentially measure the same thing and should, in theory, capture a similar set of processes; differences between these measures highlight trends and related geographies that need to be explored and explained. Migrant workers had to register with the WRS when they first took a job in the UK, and one might assume that at the same time, they would have registered for the NINo. These two processes are not formally connected, but could be reasonably assumed to be part of the same process of becoming a legal worker in the UK. With some exceptions, most notably the self-employed (who do not have to register for WRS), the WRS and NINo should therefore broadly capture the same migrant worker populations. Although, the actual registrations for each scheme may take place in different places, depending on place of residence, place of work, and

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<sup>5</sup> A similar migration dataset is the UK National Health Service's 'Flag 4' data, which records registrations with General Practitioners (local doctors) from individuals previously resident outside the UK. However, unlike the NINo, Flag 4 and the GP patient register is a 'snapshot' taken annually, rather than a comprehensive record of each registration, and of course GP registration is unconnected to the working status of migrants.

the movement between these at the time of registration for both NINo and WRS. However, this is not what we find when we compare the two datasets.

Comparing the absolute numbers of NINo registrations made to Polish nationals, with WRS applications from the same group for the period May 2004-June 2011 reveals that the NINo dataset has captured far more migration activity than the Worker Registration Scheme. During this period over 965,000 allocations of a NINo were made to Polish nationals, compared to just 677,120 Polish registrations with the WRS (Table I), a difference of over 228,000, or nearly 43%. Almost half of this WRS 'undercount' comes from the GOR region of London, where the difference between NINo and WRS data was greatest, at just over 128,000 incidences (NINo counted 224,000 allocations, WRS 95,880 registrations), suggesting that WRS might have captured less than half of the Polish labour migrants in London. The magnitude of difference between NINo and WRS varies between other GORs, with the smallest differences in the East Midlands and the East of England, but on average the WRS 'undercount' is still high, at 48%. We stress here that we do not consider this 'undercount' to be precisely that, for the reasons discussed above – this is simply a convenient shorthand.

Table I: NINo and WRS applications to Polish nationals entering the UK by Government Office Region 2004/05- 2010/2011

<b>Government Office Region</b>	<b>NINo registrations to Polish nationals (000)</b>	<b>WRS applications by Polish nationals (000)</b>	<b>Difference between NINo and WRS (000)</b>	<b>% difference between NINo and WRS</b>
London	224.00	95.88	128.12	133.6
East Midlands	76.20	69.04	7.16	10.4
East of England	88.18	78.80	9.38	11.9
West Midlands	76.72	59.83	16.90	28.2
South East	114.81	87.42	27.40	31.3
South West	68.34	56.24	12.11	21.5
Yorkshire and the Humber	67.22	56.42	10.81	19.2
North West	81.93	60.74	21.20	34.9
Wales	28.64	19.95	8.70	43.6
North East	22.50	8.74	13.76	157.4
Scotland	85.21	62.60	22.61	36.1
Northern Ireland	31.65	21.49	10.17	47.3
<b>Total</b>	965.40	677.12	288.28	Average= 48.0 42.6

*Source: NINo registrations are 100% extract from NIRS, DWP 2011. WRS applications are author's own calculations from WRS data obtained by contact with the UK Border Agency*

There are at least four possible explanations for the difference between these datasets, both of which should in theory represent comprehensive, 'absolute', rather than sample survey data. These explanations could operate in isolation or in combination in any given region, but in each case they raise questions both about the activities of migrants and their interface with formal registration schemes.



First, existing studies have identified an apparent 'rural bias' in flow of Polish migrants to the UK, but this analysis is based on the Worker Registration Scheme (Stenning and Dawley 2009). If the evidence from the city of London is extrapolated to other large cities, then this might indicate a widespread undercounting of Polish migrant workers in urban areas. This might be explained by the opportunity for work of an informal nature being greater in urban than rural areas. Such informal employment may not insist on application to the WRS. This offers a different view to those conclusions already drawn about the geographical distribution of Polish workers which, based on WRS data, which show high levels of migrants in rural areas (Stenning and Dawley 2009).

Second, and connectedly, is the importance of London as a migrant destination, which could be being significantly underestimated in research informed by the relatively low levels of Polish migrant workers recorded in the capital by the WRS. If this is the case, then rather than constituting a significantly different migrant distribution, Polish migrants to the UK as part of the NMS immigration stream could in fact be mirroring far more closely the geographical distributions of previous waves of immigrants to the UK.

Thirdly, and alternatively, it could be that rather than WRS applications being artificially low in London, NINO registrations are artificially high. This might be because Polish migrants could be arriving first into London, registering for a NI number there, and then dispersing to other regions of the UK (Drinkwater *et al.* 2010), where they might later register for the WRS. In the absence of research which

traces the geographical trajectories of Polish migrants within the UK, and the timing of their engagement with official schemes such as NINo and WRS, we cannot speculate about the accuracy of this explanation, but it undoubtedly requires further research. The temporary nature of work for Polish migrants in the UK could perhaps explain this with working 'visits' of a few months causing Poles to register for a NINo in one location and then relocating to another for a new job.

Finally, the discrepancy between WRS and NINo could be explained by something other than either a rural WRS bias or a quirk of migrant movement into and through London and possibly other urban centres. A significant difference between the operation of the WRS and NINo dataset is in the type of workers that they reflect. WRS only targets employees, those taking existing jobs in the UK, who must register when they obtain a job, and if they change job within 12 months of arrival in the UK. The self-employed, however, are not required to apply for registration through WRS. By contrast, the NINo dataset should include *all* those working legally in the UK, whether employed or self-employed. In order to qualify for UK social welfare benefits and the state pension, both the employed and the self-employed must register for a National Insurance number. An unspecified but potentially significant proportion of the discrepancy between WRS and NINo is caused by the numbers of Poles who are self-employed, acting entrepreneurially to establish businesses in the UK, and who are therefore excluded from the Worker Registration Scheme.

## **Regional and Local Geographies of Polish Migration to the UK**

Putting the absolute differences between WRS and NINo and the possible reasons for them to one side, there are also comparisons to be drawn between the relative levels of data recorded by both schemes at the regional and local levels. In this section some recent studies are explored, largely based on WRS data, which seek to identify the location of A8 labour migrants, and compare their findings both with each other and with an analysis based on the NINo.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, much Polish migration research has used WRS data to identify and focus upon London as a significant area of settlement. Eade *et al.* (2006) used WRS data (along with LFS data) to identify Polish respondents in London to participate in their research into class and ethnicity. Similarly Sales *et al.* (2009) use WRS data to explore the settlement patterns of Polish migrants to support their choice of London for research into Polish children educated in English schools. It should be noted that, as with WRS data at a national level, it is likely that the WRS has significantly undercounted total numbers of Polish migrants in the capital.

Using the Worker Registration Scheme at the national level, Bauere *et al.* (2007) mapped the numbers of A8 nationals (including Poles) registering for a WRS per thousand of the total population for each Local Authority in the UK. Their results showed that the A8 population had spread widely across the UK, with the highest ratios of A8 to 'background' population in Northern Ireland, Eastern England, and North Norfolk, and in scattered local concentrations in the Midlands, South West

and South East. By contrast, they found low ratios in Wales, the North East and the North West (Bauere *et al.* 2007: 8). The local authority with the highest ratio was the City of London, with the City of Westminster (central London) third. The East Midlands authorities of Boston, Northampton, and South Holland were second, fourth and fifth, and the East of England authorities of Peterborough, Fenland and East Cambridgeshire also ranked highly (Bauere *et al.* 2007: 8).

Also using WRS data, Green *et al.* (2007a&b) focused their analysis on the East and West Midlands in their study of the impacts of recent waves of NMS migration on labour markets. Using the UK Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)<sup>6</sup> urban/rural classification scheme to ascertain the types of settlement to which migrants had located (Green *et al.* 2007b), they found that the most significant levels of accession migration were in rural areas with concentrations of food growing, processing and packaging industries; a summer peak in WRS applications suggesting that seasonal work was being undertaken by NMS migrants in these areas. This finding is supported by other research which argues that a key feature of the A8 migration to the UK appears to be a greater orientation towards rural areas than in previous migrations (Stenning *et al.* 2006, CRC 2007, Chappell *et al.* 2009, Trade Union Congress 2004).

Using WRS alongside 2001 Census data, Stenning and Dawley's (2009: 279) research supports the thesis that it is not only core cities which are attracting A8 migrants:

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<sup>6</sup> DEFRA is a government department in the UK. They make policy and legislation, and work with others to deliver our policies in the natural environment sustainable development, food and rural communities, amongst others.

“they are living and working in everyday, small-town, peripheral Britain”. They argue that the geography of recent migrants is “quite different to that of the early years” (ibid: 275), suggesting that these recent migrants are targeting ‘peripheral’ regions of the UK, such as the North East and East of England. They use WRS and Census data to calculate Location Quotients (LQs) for each UK local authority, to indicate the under- or over- representation of A8 migrant groups. All five of their highest LQs are in the Fens region of Eastern England, and two Government Office Regions – East of England and East Midlands – dominate the results. Other rural authorities in Scotland, Northern Ireland and the South West are also strongly represented, showing that they are home to disproportionate numbers of A8 populations (Stenning and Dawley 2009: 277). In this study the meaning of the terms “peripheral Britain” and ‘peripherality’ for the migrants themselves are not defined. Therefore, they might reasonably include an element of rurality rather than location in major urban centres.

In summary, these studies which predominantly use WRS data identify a similar set of regions in the UK to which A8 immigrants appear to have been attracted. London, the East of England, the East Midlands, and Northern Ireland are highlighted by these studies, and Stenning and Dawley (2009) additionally identify Scotland and the South West of England. Both Green *et al.* (2007a&b) and Stenning and Dawley (2009) draw particular attention to the more rural areas as destinations for A8 migrants, largely due to the temporary/ seasonal nature of agricultural work available to Poles in these rural areas allowing a return to Poland during periods between contracts.

Comparing studies using the WRS dataset with an analysis of the NINo dataset as it pertains to Poles shows some interesting similarities. At the national level, during the period 2002-09 there were high absolute numbers of Polish registrations right across the UK (Table II), with the majority in London, the South East, Scotland, the East of England and the North West GORs (Figure 1). Considering Polish registrations as a proportion of the working population of each GOR, however, while London remains dominant, the NINo results echo the findings of Bauere (2007) and Stenning and Dawley (2009), in also identifying Northern Ireland, the East Midlands, Scotland and the West Midlands as regions with high relative levels of migrants. However, whereas Stenning and Dawley (2009) described this distribution as migrants living in 'peripheral' regions, in terms of their location in predominantly rural local authorities within these GORs, the NINo data indicates a slightly different pattern.

Table II: NINo registrations to Polish nationals entering the UK by Government Office Region 2002/2003- 2010/2011

<b>Government Office Region</b>	<b>NINo registrations to Polish nationals (000)</b>	<b>Total regional employment (000)</b>	<b>Poles as a Percentage of the working population</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>	<b>Rank</b>
London	231.97	3850.33	6.02	2.48	1
Northern Ireland	31.71	803.11	3.95	0.6892	2
Scotland	92.52	2506.14	3.69	0.46427	3
East Midlands	76.41	2152.60	3.55	0.34316	4
West Midlands	77.01	2412.48	3.19	0.03172	5
East of England	88.61	2845.77	3.11	-0.03749	6
Yorkshire and the Humber	67.37	2398.87	2.81	-0.29702	7
South East	115.84	4198.33	2.76	-0.34027	8
South West	68.64	2494.07	2.75	-0.34893	9
North West	82.19	3121.09	2.63	-0.45274	10
Wales	28.70	1338.22	2.14	-0.87664	11
North East	14.23	1144.17	1.24	-1.65524	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>743.23</b>	<b>25414.85</b>			

*Source: NINo Time Series- Financial Year of Registration Date= 2002/2003- 2010/2011. In employment Times Series- April 2011- June 2011. NINo registrations are 100% extract from NIRS, DWP 2011. In employment figures are from ONS, 2011*

FIGURE 1 HERE

The NINo dataset can be analysed to identify local and regional geographies of NMS migrations and also localised ‘hotspots’ of Polish NINo registrations. Choosing for closer analysis two regions which fall in the middle of the NINo ranking table by both absolute and relative number of NINo registrations to Poles, the South East and the West Midlands, and which each include a variety of ‘types’ of places in terms of the level of urban and rural population as defined by DEFRA, we can identify specific

areas in which high levels of registrations have occurred.

### *The South East*

The South East Government Office Region of the UK stretches from Kent in the east, the Isle of Wight in the south, West Berkshire in the west and Milton Keynes in the north, and contains cities and large towns, small towns and also rural areas (Table III). In the South East GOR the highest NINo registrations for Poles as a proportion of the working population were in local authorities classified as 'urban' areas, specifically in the large conurbations of Slough, Southampton, Reading, Arun and Oxford (Table IV). In Slough, Polish allocations comprised almost 18% of those for the total working population. This significant presence of Polish labour migrants in 'urban' areas is reinforced by location quotients (LQs) for each of the local authorities considered, indicating the over-representation of Polish migrants in each local authority (using the number of people employed at workplaces in each local authority (NOMIS 2011) as the comparator statistic. According to the LQs, Polish labour migrants are very strongly represented in Slough, and strongly represented in Southampton and Reading- all being urban areas<sup>7</sup>. Nevertheless, this is not a straightforward urban distribution of registrations: the lowest proportions of Polish NINo registrations are also in urban areas, specifically Havant (between Portsmouth and Chichester) and Adur (in West Sussex). Similarly, scattered both towards the top and the bottom of the list of local authorities are 'rural' areas such as Chichester

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<sup>7</sup> Location quotients are a useful technique for identifying a concentration in a region or area. Here location quotients compare the share of local employment of Polish migrants to the share of national employment of Polish migrants. A location quotient of 1 indicates the local share of employment of Polish migrants is equal to the national share. A location quotient of less than 1 indicates that the local area has less Polish migrants than the national share, and a value greater than 1 indicates that the local area has a higher concentration of Polish migrants relative to the nation. Location quotients of over 1.5 indicate strong localisation.



towards the top, and Wealden towards the bottom. In short, the NINO analysis reveals that there is not a pronounced 'rural' distribution of Polish migrants in the South East.

Given the possible significance of London for Polish migrants and its proximity to the South East GOR, it might be anticipated that the distance from London would be a key factor in the distribution of Polish registrations in the South East, with those authorities closer to London having a higher proportion of registrations than those further away. This is not the case as the average distance from London for the top ten and bottom ten Local Authorities is similar (Table IV). Thus proximity to London does not appear to be an important driver in influencing the locational decisions of Polish migrants (Evans *et al.* 2005; May *et al.* 2007; Wills *et al.* 2009).

The South East and particularly Slough which tops the list of NINO registrations to Poles has a long history of Polish migration which may play a part in attracting recent migrants to this area. In the early 1950s, there were a number of Polish refugee camps around the Slough area. As returning to Poland was not considered an option by many of the wartime refugees, many Polish families decided to settle in Slough, an expanding town seeking committed workers and offering a chance to own homes for those prepared to work hard. In response to the growing population a Polish-speaking Roman Catholic Parish was established with its own church building. This link between the area and the Polish community may explain the high numbers of Poles settling there either through family living in the area or through an awareness of its established Polish community which offers a sense of stability and familiarity

when migrating to a new country.

Drinkwater *et al.* (2010) report that nearly 30% of Polish migrants in the UK are employed in manufacturing. Slough and the South East provide a range of low-skilled manufacturing opportunities for Polish migrants perhaps explaining the high levels of Polish NINo registrations in this GOR. Slough is now headquarters of the mobile communications giant O2, Research in Motion the makers of the Blackberry and LG the mobile phone handset makers. It is also home to the UK bases of Fiat, Harley-Davidson and Mars. Possible explanations for the concentration of Polish workers in low-skilled occupations such as manufacturing include the impact of short-term migration strategies on job choices and the restrictions on the types of jobs available to workers with relatively poor English-language skills (Clark and Drinkwater 2008).

Table III: The DEFRA urban/rural categorisation

<b>Classification</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Major Urban (MU)</b>	Districts with either 100,000 people or 50% of their population in urban areas with a population of more than 750,000.
<b>Large Urban (LU)</b>	Districts with either 50,000 people or 50 percent of their population in one of 17 urban areas with a population between 250,000 and 750,000.
<b>Other Urban (OU)</b>	Districts with fewer than 37,000 people or less than 26% of their population in rural settlements and larger market towns.
<b>Significant Rural (SU)</b>	Districts with more than 37,000 people or more than 26% of their population in rural settlements and larger market towns.
<b>Rural-50 (R50)</b>	Districts with at least 50% but less than 80% of their population in rural settlements and larger market towns.
<b>Rural-80 (R80)</b>	Districts with at least 80% of their population in rural settlements and larger market towns.

*Source: DEFRA 2009a*

Table IV: NINo registrations to Polish nationals in the local authorities of the South East region of the UK 2002/2003- 2010/2011

Local authority	NINo registrations to Polish nationals (000)	Total local authority employment (000)	Poles as a percentage of the working population	Standard deviation	Rank	Location Quotients (LQ)	DEFRA classification	Distance from London (miles)
<b>Top ten local authorities</b>								
Slough	10.83	61.1	17.73	2.47316	1	5.2092	Other Urban	22.4
Southampton	12.17	115.7	10.52	0.81857	2	3.0913	Large Urban	80.5
Reading	5.99	79.7	7.52	0.13012	3	2.2088	Large Urban	41.7
Arun	4.45	65.5	6.79	-0.03741	4	1.9967	Large Urban	65.2
Oxford	4.6	76.2	6.04	-0.20952	5	1.7741	Other Urban	59.4
Tunbridge Wells	2.66	51	5.22	-0.3977	6	1.5328	Significant Rural	39.4
Cherwell	3.17	70.8	4.48	-0.56752	7	1.3159	Significant Rural	80.9
Crawley	2.39	54.2	4.41	-0.58358	8	1.2959	Other Urban	30.7
Chichester	2.1	56.9	3.69	-0.74881	9	1.0847	80+% Rural	65
Eastbourne	1.46	46.7	3.13	-0.87732	10	0.9188	Other Urban	72.6
<b>Bottom ten local authorities</b>								
Worthing	0.51	49.1	1.04	1.34559	59	0.3053	Large Urban	61
Gosport	0.37	36.4	1.02	1.23252	60	0.2987	Large Urban	97.3
Mid Sussex	0.65	67	0.97	0.94983	61	0.2851	80+% Rural	38.5
Horsham	0.56	64.2	0.87	0.38445	62	0.2564	50-80% Rural	40.1
Tandridge	0.34	42.6	0.8	-0.01131	63.5	0.2346	50-80% Rural	21.5
Rother	0.29	36.4	0.8	-0.01131	63.5	0.2341	50-80% Rural	58.1
Wealden	0.46	63.3	0.73	-0.40707	65	0.2136	80+% Rural	53.1
Fareham	0.39	57.4	0.68	-0.68976	66	0.1997	Large Urban	92.3
Adur	0.17	29	0.59	-1.19859	67	0.1723	Large Urban	57.3
Havant	0.29	55.5	0.52	-1.59435	68	0.1536	Large Urban	69.6

Source: NINo Time Series- Financial Year of Registration Date= 2002/2003- 2010/2011. In employment Times Series- Jan10-Dec 10. NINo registrations are 100% extract from NIRS, DWP 2011. In employment figures are from NOMIS 2011. Classification figures are from DEFRA 2009b.

### *The West Midlands*

The same variable picture emerges in the West Midlands. Like the South East, the region is geographically diverse, with two major conurbations (Birmingham and the Black Country, and Stoke-on-Trent), cathedral cities and market towns and rural areas in the western counties of Shropshire and Herefordshire which border Wales. The region includes Britain's second city, Birmingham, part of the West Midlands conurbation. As is the case in the South East GOR, in the West Midlands, both urban and rural areas occupy positions throughout the ranking of local authorities by Polish NINo registrations as a proportion of the workforce (Table V). In this GOR, the list is headed by the rural area of Herefordshire, where Polish allocations comprise almost 9% of those for the entire working population, which is a significant representation according to the LQs. Herefordshire is closely followed by the town of Rugby with Polish allocation comprising 6.58% of the entire working population. At the bottom of the list is the major 'urban' area of Dudley, very close to the city of Birmingham, and the more rural areas of Cannock, Bromsgrove and Southern Staffordshire.

Table V: NINo registrations to Polish nationals in the local authorities of the West Midlands region of the UK 2002/2003- 2010/2011

Local authority	NINO registrations to Polish nationals (000)	Total local authority employment (000)	Poles as a percentage of the working population	Standard deviation	Rank	Location Quotients (LQ)	DEFRA classification
Herefordshire, County of	7.05	82.20	8.58	2.49567	1	2.5206	50-80% Rural Significant
Rugby	2.75	41.80	6.58	1.59789	2	1.9335	Rural
Coventry	9.17	139.90	6.55	1.58443	3	1.9263	Large Urban
Sandwell	6.82	111.60	6.11	1.38692	4	1.7960	Major Urban
Redditch	2.32	39.50	5.87	1.27918	5	1.7261	Other Urban
Wychavon	3.01	58.70	5.13	0.94701	6	1.5070	80+% Rural Significant
East Staffordshire	2.65	53.50	4.95	0.86621	7	1.4557	Rural
Stratford on Avon	2.77	57.70	4.80	0.79887	8	1.4109	80+% Rural
Worcester	2.15	47.10	4.56	0.69114	9	1.3415	Other Urban
Telford and Wrekin	2.81	74.00	3.80	0.34998	10	1.1160	Other Urban
Birmingham	15.33	407.00	3.77	0.33652	11	1.1070	Major Urban
Wolverhampton	3.43	91.90	3.73	0.31856	12	1.0969	Major Urban
Tamworth	0.88	31.00	2.84	-0.08095	13	0.8343	Other Urban Significant
Stafford	1.47	57.90	2.54	-0.21562	14	0.7461	Rural
Stoke on Trent	2.37	101.90	2.33	-0.30988	15	0.6835	Large Urban Significant
Warwick Nuneaton and Bedworth	1.51	69.90	2.16	-0.38619	16	0.6349	Rural
Malvern Hills	1.10	54.50	2.02	-0.44904	17	0.5932	Other Urban
Walsall	0.66	33.50	1.97	-0.47148	18	0.5790	50-80% Rural
	1.83	100.90	1.81	-0.54331	19	0.5330	Major Urban Significant
Wyre Forest	0.79	45.60	1.73	-0.57922	20	0.5091	Rural
Lichfield	0.78	47.30	1.65	-0.61513	21	0.4846	50-80% Rural
North							
Warwickshire	0.44	29.30	1.50	-0.68246	22	0.4413	50-80% Rural
Shropshire	2.04	138.40	1.47	-0.69593	23	0.4332	50-80% Rural
Newcastle							
Under Lyme	0.57	55.70	1.02	-0.89793	24	0.3007	Large Urban
Solihull	0.61	88.50	0.69	-1.04606	25	0.2026	Major Urban
Staffordshire							
Moorlands	0.31	47.70	0.65	-1.06402	26	0.1910	50-80% Rural
Dudley	0.82	134.80	0.61	-1.08197	27	0.1788	Major Urban

Cannock Chase	0.24	49.50	0.48	-1.14033	28	0.1425	Significant Rural
Bromsgrove South	0.16	43.90	0.36	-1.19419	29	0.1071	Significant Rural
Staffordshire	0.17	47.90	0.35	-1.19868	30	0.1043	Significant Rural

*Source: NINo Time Series- Financial Year of Registration Date= 2002/2003- 2010/2011. In employment Times Series- Jan 2010- Dec 2010. NINo registrations are 100% extract from NIRS, DWP 2011. In employment figures are from NOMIS 2011. Classification figures are from DEFRA 2009b.*

As with the South East, the West Midlands has a well established Polish population from the post-war era. This older Polish community is concentrated in the region's capital of Birmingham. This is reflected in the existence of a Polish club which was developed as a place to socialise and to share the common experience of migration and adjusting to life in the UK. The Polish Club (the premises of which is known as Polish Millennium House) is based in Digbeth, Birmingham and was established in 1963 by Poles connected with the local Polish Catholic Church. The established Polish community may have acted to encourage Polish migrants to the area.

The high number of registrations in Herefordshire and Rugby could be explained by its proximity to the established Polish community in Birmingham. Also, the rural nature of these areas leads to a high number of temporary/ seasonal agricultural jobs which are accessible to lower-skilled Poles who have a low command of English and who may wish to return to Poland. These jobs make rural areas in the West Midlands desirable locations for migrants.

Green *et al.* (2007b) support these occupational characteristics of Polish migrants in the West Midlands suggesting that they are “disproportionately concentrated in Operative and Elementary occupations” with 12.2% working in agriculture (ibid: 55). Nevertheless, they are highly qualified and are more likely to have degree-level qualifications than the West Midlands population (Green *et al.* 2007b). Drinkwater *et al.* (2010) support this suggesting that Polish migrants are highly qualified but lacking in English language skills. As such they may represent ‘high quality workers’ in ‘low-waged work’ (Anderson *et al.* 2006). This typifies Polish migrants in the West Midlands.

In neither the South East nor the West Midlands is there a significant weighting of Polish migrants towards either ‘urban’ or ‘rural’ areas. Instead, a patchwork or mosaic exists of both high and low levels of registrations in proportion to the workforce as a whole across the entire range of classifications of local authority, from the most urban to the most rural in terms of population distribution. In both regions, there are locations with very significant concentrations of Polish workers such as Slough, Southampton and Rugby. Since these locally high levels appear against an average level for the respective GORs which is relatively low at the national scale (see Table II) such locally anomalous places might be argued to merit further investigation. It is worth noting that these places have been completely overlooked by earlier studies<sup>8</sup>.

The identification of Slough, Southampton and Rugby as ‘hotspots’ of Polish

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<sup>8</sup> Studies into Polish migrant workers in the UK at the local focus on London (Garapich 2006), Newcastle (Stenning and Dawley 2009), and Scotland (Helinska-Hughes *et al.* 2009) with some work on the West Midlands region (Meardi 2007) but not at the local authority level.



immigration raises some interesting questions regarding the emerging geography of Polish migration, but the analysis of the NINo dataset also raises another set of interesting issues that require further detailed investigation. First, by conducting the same process demonstrated here for these two mid-ranking GORs, researchers could identify disproportionately high or unusually low levels of NMS migrants from any of the A8 states in any of the GORs. This could involve either GORs with high or low 'background' levels of NINo allocations to NMS nationals, or selecting a range of levels of NINo allocations across a variety of 'types' of place according to the DEFRA classification of urban/rural places. Secondly, the analysis highlights the difference between the NINo and the WRS datasets which may be explained by the self-employed Polish migrants that are captured by the NINo but not the WRS.

### **Explorations and Entrepreneurialism**

The analysis of the distribution of NINo registrations to Poles differs from the distributions of A8 migrants, which might be anticipated based on the findings of previous studies using WRS data. It is worth exploring what these differences are and why they might have occurred. WRS data suggests that A8 migrants to the UK have been attracted to and have settled in 'peripheral' areas, which correspond broadly to rural areas. In the West Midlands, Green *et al.* (2007a&b) suggested a similar rural distribution of A8 migrant workers. Albeit focusing on different regions of the UK, but with the overlap of the West Midlands, the NINo data does not bear this distribution out. The differences could be due to the 'rural bias' of the WRS which seems to undercount migrant workers in urban areas. The urban-rural discrepancy

could perhaps be attributed to the concentration of Polish migrants in low-skilled occupations. Such migrants may have registered for a NINo but failed to register for a WRS due to the informal nature of their work, particularly in rural areas where migrants are concentrated in agricultural jobs. This could explain why we see more urban areas towards the tops of tables of Polish NINo registrations in these two regions than the arguments advanced by Green *et al.* (2007a&b) and Stenning and Dawley (2009) might anticipate.

An alternative explanation might be found in the intrinsic difference between the two datasets; the difference may be explained by the additional group of self-employed Polish migrants that are captured by the NINo but not the WRS. It could be that in these two GORs, the unexpectedly high levels of Polish NINo registrations are attributable, in part, to a WRS rural bias, but also that they might reflect a significant occurrence of Polish self-employment in urban areas. This would be supported by the idea that Poles who have a low command of English (and who are likely to be lower-skilled) are likely to work in agriculture or factories in rural areas, as illustrated by the high levels of NINo registrations in Herefordshire and Rugby. Poles who speak English may be more likely to be entrepreneurs in larger cities. We do not suggest here that self-employment amongst Poles is so widespread as to account for the whole of the discrepancy between WRS and NINo, but we do contend that there is sufficient indication here of its magnitude; entrepreneurialism amongst Poles and potentially other A8 migrants should be afforded more academic and policy attention. The LFS survey supports this, with the self-employed among Polish migrants (January 2003- December 2011) representing 10% of the working

Polish population (LFS, 2012). This suggests a self-employed element to the population but not one that accounts for the whole discrepancy between the NINO and WRS. This figure of course varies between regions with the share of self-employed Poles in London being higher at 19% (LFS, 2012).

The literature on immigrant entrepreneurship suggests that entrepreneurial activity tends to be located in urban, rather than rural areas (Light 1972; Borjas 1986; Aldrich *et al.* 1990; Rath 2000; Masurel *et al.* 2002; Wang 2010; Lashner Dayanim 2011). In part this is to service the usually urban immigrant population distribution, but also because urban areas provide the highest levels of passing trade, regardless of its nationality or ethnicity, and therefore yield the greatest likelihood of achieving 'break-out' for the business from catering purely to this limited co-ethnic market.

Entrepreneurialism and self-employment amongst long-standing immigrant groups in the UK has been intensively researched (Werbner 1984; Ram *et al.* 2002; Bagwell 2008; Gomez and Cheung 2009), but thus far, this kind of activity amongst A8 migrants, including Poles, has remained under-researched. This is perhaps in part because of the initial impression generated by the UK press in the early years of EU Accession, when the popular discourse was that Poles were 'taking our jobs' and working in low-paid industries (see Portes and French 2005; McDowell *et al.* 2007; Meardi 2007) rather than making their *own* jobs, and creating others, through entrepreneurial activity. Consequently, accession entrepreneurs have been largely absent from academic and media debates. This omission is surprising as Polish entrepreneurship has become a very visible presence in Britain's urban areas

(Figures 2 and 3). Polish retail businesses can be found in many cities and towns and are easily identified by their shops fronts and signs. Polish migrants have established businesses in many sectors including Polish restaurants, delicatessens, supermarkets, nightclubs, hairdressers, mechanics, garages, beauticians, employment agencies, plumbers, builders, painters and decorators and cheque cashing agencies. Some of these businesses (particularly delicatessens) were originally targeted at short-term migrants with little English and a demand for familiar brands of products. However, many have now developed an established customer-base of Polish migrants whose migration is long-term with a view to remaining in the community to which they have relocated (self-referenceB). The existence of Polish businesses therefore provides an indication of the geography of Polish settlement patterns.

FIGURE 2 HERE

FIGURE 3 HERE

Accession migrants settle in different places for different reasons; cheap housing, low living costs, an abundance of work, availability of good schooling for foreign national children, the prior establishment of a supportive community of co-ethnics, and so on (see Ross 2006) may all act to encourage immigration and settlement. We argue here, based on the indication drawn from the comparison between the WRS and NINo datasets that self-employment may be a significant economic activity for Poles, that the local environment for business start-up should also be considered a migrant magnet. By extension, we would also argue that future research into the

labour market experiences of Polish and other NMS migrants should not be restricted to the analysis of NMS migrants as employees, but also to the analysis of NMS migrants as entrepreneurs and job creators. The intra-urban geography of NMS entrepreneurship requires further research as it would seem to have an interesting geography related to peripheral locations adjacent to central shopping districts. In the UK Polish entrepreneurs appear to be playing an important role in transforming vacant, peripheral and relatively low cost retail space into niche retail spaces that are contributing to urban revitalisation. Despite this, investigations into Polish entrepreneurship are severely limited (Lassalle *et al.* 2011a; Lassalle *et al.* 2011b; Helinska-Hughes *et al.* 2009; Vershinina *et al.* 2009; self referenceB ). There is, however, substantial qualitative research into NMS migrants and particularly Polish migrants living and working in the UK (Pollard *et al.* 2008; White and Ryan 2008; Ryan *et al.* 2008; Sales *et al.* 2009; Lopez-Rodriguez *et al.* 2010; Rabikowska, 2010; Temple, 2010; White, 2010; Ryan and Sales 2011) which could form the basis of future qualitative research into Polish entrepreneurship.

In response to the results of the quantitative analysis conducted here, combined with the lack of research into self-employed Polish migrants in the UK, we have undertaken intensive research into Polish entrepreneurship in the West Midlands to explore the form that this takes in relation to accession. We have identified 48 Polish firms operating in the West Midlands that are associated with accession. The 48 firms do not represent the complete population of such firms. Thirty-six of these firms were established prior to accession between December 2002 and 30<sup>th</sup> April 2004 whilst 12 were established after accession between 1<sup>st</sup> May 2004 and June

2009. The firms established prior to EU enlargement stressed the importance of migrating before May 2004 so that their businesses would be able to capitalise immediately on accession migration flows. This raises a series of questions regarding migration that is linked to major geopolitical transformations, such as accession. The driver behind the migration of Polish entrepreneurs was, unlike many other migrations, not a push related to war, but an alteration in the structure of relationships between countries driven by negotiations over a treaty. This means that for many of these migrants their migration was carefully planned around the geopolitics of accession.

## **Conclusion**

The accession of ten new member states to the European Union is associated with new migration flows that have led to much media discussion and political comment. The analysis of NMS migration to the UK is difficult as there are problems with available national datasets; migration is always a difficult process to track effectively.

The paper makes two significant contributions to existing research into labour migration from the NMS to the UK, and in particular that from Poland. First, it explores the differences between the widely used Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) dataset and the more recently recognised National Insurance Number allocation (NINO). On the basis of this analysis, the article calls into question the conclusions drawn about the location of NMS migrants in the UK that are based on the analysis of the WRS dataset. Existing studies have identified a rural or peripheral bias in the intra-geography of Polish migration to the UK. Our analysis suggests that

NMS migration has focused on both urban and rural locations.

Second, the discrepancies observed between the WRS and NINo datasets potentially reveal a geography of self-employment and entrepreneurial activity amongst Polish and potentially other NMS migrants. Entrepreneurial activity amongst NMS migrants is under-researched and merits further investigation. The drivers behind this process of new firm formation must be explored. Our preliminary research into this activity suggests that two waves of Polish entrepreneurs responded to the business opportunities associated with EU enlargement – pre-accession migrants who established businesses in anticipation of EU enlargement and post-accession migrants. It is this issue that is the current focus of our research into the geography of accession migrants to the UK.

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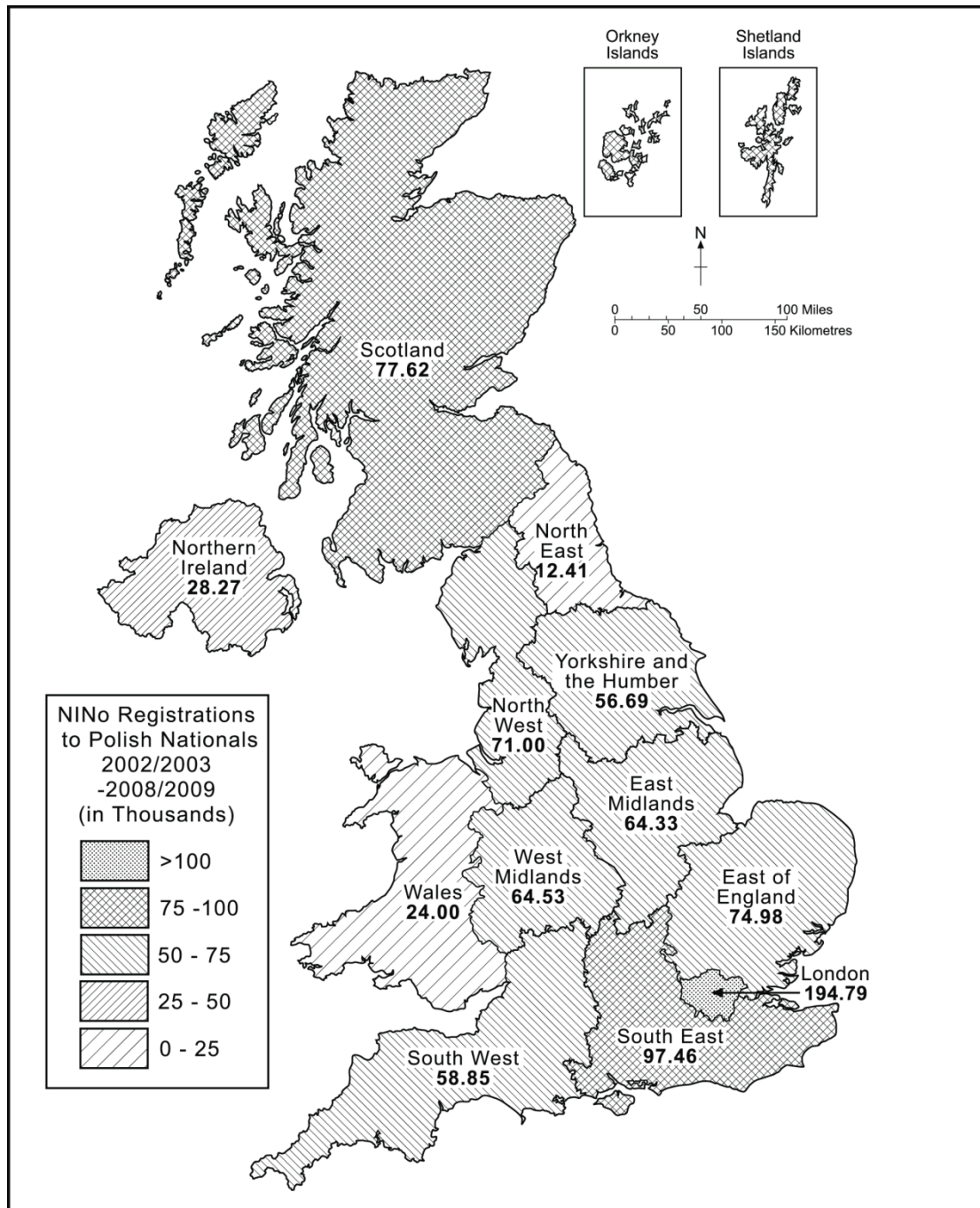
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## **Graphics**

Figure 1: NI No registrations to Polish nationals 2002/2003- 2008/2009 for the Government Office Regions of the UK



Source: Author's own calculations from NINO dataset 2002/2003- 2008/2009<sup>9</sup>

Figure 2. Polish Delicatessen in Bournemouth.

<sup>9</sup> The figures were calculated by adding together the GOR totals for each region for each financial year from 2002/2003 - 2008/2009



*Source: Author's own photograph*

Figure 3. Eastern European Supermarket in King's Lynn.



*Source: Author's own photograph*